I. PRELIMINARY APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM

1. The Sociological Concept of Thought

This book is concerned with the problem of how men actually think. The aim of these studies is to investigate not how thinking appears in textbooks on logic, but how it really functions in public life and in politics as an instrument of collective action.

Philosophers have too long concerned themselves with their own thinking. When they wrote of thought, they had in mind primarily their own history, the history of philosophy, or quite special fields of knowledge such as mathematics or physics. This type of thinking is applicable only under quite special circumstances, and what can be learned by analysing it is not directly transferable to other spheres of life. Even when it is applicable, it refers only to a specific dimension of existence which does not suffice for living human beings who are seeking to comprehend and to mould their world.

Meanwhile, acting men have, for better or for worse, proceeded to develop a variety of methods for the experiential and intellectual penetration of the world in which they live, which have never been analysed with the same precision as the so-called exact modes of knowing. When, however, any human activity continues over a long period without being subjected to intellectual control or criticism, it tends to get out of hand.

Hence it is to be regarded as one of the anomalies of our time that those methods of thought by means of which we arrive at our most crucial decisions, and through which we seek to diagnose and guide our political and social destiny, have remained unrecognized and therefore inaccessible to intellectual control and self-criticism. This anomaly becomes all the more monstrous when we call to mind that in modern times much more depends on the correct thinking through of a situation than was the case in earlier societies. The significance of social knowledge grows proportionately with the increasing necessity of regulatory intervention in the social process. This so-called pre-scientific inexact mode of thought, however (which, paradoxically, the logicians and philosophers also use when they have to make

practical decisions), is not to be understood solely by the use of logical analysis. It constitutes a complex which cannot be readily detached either from the psychological roots of the emotional and vital impulses which underlie it or from the situation in which it arises and which it seeks to solve.

It is the most essential task of this book to work out a suitable method for the description and analysis of this type of thought and its changes, and to formulate those problems connected with it which will both do justice to its unique character and prepare the way for its critical understanding. The method which we will seek to present is that of the sociology of knowledge.

The principal thesis of the sociology of knowledge is that there are modes of thought which cannot be adequately understood as long as their social origins are obscured. It is indeed true that only the individual is capable of thinking. There is no such metaphysical entity as a group mind which thinks over and above the heads of individuals, or whose ideas the individual merely reproduces. Nevertheless it would be false to deduce from this that all the ideas and sentiments which motivate an individual have their origin in him alone, and can be adequately explained solely on the basis of his own life-experience.

Just as it would be incorrect to attempt to derive a language merely from observing a single individual, who speaks not a language of his own but rather that of his contemporaries and predecessors who have prepared the path for him, so it is incorrect to explain the totality of an outlook only with reference to its genesis in the mind of the individual. Only in a quite limited sense does the single individual create out of himself the mode of speech and of thought we attribute to him. He speaks the language of his group; he thinks in the manner in which his group thinks. He finds at his disposal only certain words and their meanings. These not only determine to a large extent the avenues of approach to the surrounding world, but they also show at the same time from which angle and in which context of activity objects have hitherto been perceptible and accessible to the group or the individual.

The first point which we now have to emphasize is that the approach of the sociology of knowledge intentionally does not start with the single individual and his thinking in order then to proceed directly in the manner of the philosopher to the abstract heights of "thought as such". Rather, the sociology

of knowledge seeks to comprehend thought in the concrete setting of an historical-social situation out of which individually differentiated thought only very gradually emerges. Thus, it is not men in general who think, or even isolated individuals who do the thinking, but men in certain groups who have developed a particular style of thought in an endless series of responses to certain typical situations characterizing their common position.

Strictly speaking it is incorrect to say that the single individual thinks. Rather it is more correct to insist that he participates in thinking further what other men have thought before him. He finds himself in an inherited situation with patterns of thought which are appropriate to this situation and attempts to elaborate further the inherited modes of response or to substitute others for them in order to deal more adequately with the new challenges which have arisen out of the shifts and changes in his situation. Every individual is therefore in a two-fold sense predetermined by the fact of growing up in a society: on the one hand he finds a ready-made situation and on the other he finds in that situation preformed patterns of thought and of conduct.

The second feature characterizing the method of the sociology of knowledge is that it does not sever the concretely existing modes of thought from the context of collective action through which we first discover the world in an intellectual sense. Men living in groups do not merely coexist physically as discrete individuals. They do not confront the objects of the world from the abstract levels of a contemplating mind as such, nor do they do so exclusively as solitary beings. On the contrary they act with and against one another in diversely organized groups, and while doing so they think with and against one another. These persons, bound together into groups, strive in accordance with the character and position of the groups to which they belong to change the surrounding world of nature and society or attempt to maintain it in a given condition. It is the direction of this will to change or to maintain, of this collective activity, which produces the guiding thread for the emergence of their problems, their concepts, and their forms of thought. In accord with the particular context of collective activity in which they participate, men always tend to see the world which surrounds them differently. Just as pure logical analysis has severed individual thought from its group situation, so it also separated thought from action. It did this on the tacit assumption that those inherent

connections which always exist in reality between thought on the one hand, and group and activity on the other, are either insignificant for "correct" thinking or can be detached from these foundations without any resultant difficulties. But the fact that one ignores something by no means puts an end to its existence. Nor can anyone who has not first given himself whole-heartedly to the exact observation of the wealth of forms in which men really think decide *a priori* whether this severance from the social situation and context of activity is always realizable. Nor indeed can it be determined offhand that such a complete dichotomy is fully desirable precisely in the interest of objective factual knowledge.

It may be that, in certain spheres of knowledge, it is the impulse to act which first makes the objects of the world accessible to the acting subject, and it may be further that it is this factor which determines the selection of those elements of reality which enter into thought. And it is not inconceivable that if this volitional factor were entirely excluded (in so far as such a thing is possible), the concrete content would completely disappear from the concepts, and the organizing principle which first makes possible an intelligent statement of the problem would be lost.

But this is not to say that in those domains where attachment to the group and orientation towards action seem to be an essential element in the situation, every possibility of intellectual, critical self-control is futile. Perhaps it is precisely when the hitherto concealed dependence of thought on group existence and its rootedness in action becomes visible that it really becomes possible for the first time, through becoming aware of them, to attain a new mode of control over previously uncontrolled factors in thought.

This brings us to the central problem of the book. These remarks should make it clear that a preoccupation with these problems and their solution will furnish a foundation for the social sciences and answer the question as to the possibility of the scientific guidance of political life. It is, of course, true that in the social sciences, as elsewhere, the ultimate criterion of truth or falsity is to be found in the investigation of the object, and the sociology of knowledge is no substitute for this. But the examination of the object is not an isolated act ; it takes place in a context which is coloured by values and collective-unconscious, volitional impulses. In the social sciences it is this intellectual interest, oriented in a matrix of collective activity, which provides not

only the general questions, but the concrete hypotheses for research and the thought-models for the ordering of experience. Only as we succeed in bringing into the area of conscious and explicit observation the various points of departure and of approach to the facts which are current in scientific as well as popular discussion, can we hope, in the course of time, to control the unconscious motivations and presuppositions which, in the last analysis, have brought these modes of thought into existence. A new type of objectivity in the social sciences is attainable not through the exclusion of evaluations but through the critical awareness and control of them.

2. The Contemporary Predicament of Thought

It is by no means an accident that the problem of the social and activistic roots of thinking has emerged in our generation. Nor is it accidental that the unconscious, which has hitherto motivated our thought and activity, has been gradually raised to the level of awareness and thereby made accessible to control. It would be a failure to recognize its relevance to our own plight if we did not see that it is a specific social situation which has impelled us to reflect about the social roots of our knowledge. It is one of the fundamental insights of the sociology of knowledge that the process by which collective-unconscious motives become conscious cannot operate in every epoch, but only in a quite specific situation. This situation is sociologically determinable. One can point out with relative precision the factors which are inevitably forcing more and more persons to reflect not merely about the things of the world, but about thinking itself and even here not so much about truth in itself, as about the alarming fact that the same world can appear differently to different observers.

It is clear that such problems can become general only in an age in which disagreement is more conspicuous than agreement. One turns from the direct observation of things to the consideration of ways of thinking only when the possibility of the direct and continuous elaboration of concepts concerning things and situations has collapsed in the face of a multiplicity of fundamentally divergent definitions. Now we are enabled to designate more precisely than a general and formal analysis makes possible, exactly in which social and intellectual situation such a shift of attention from things to divergent opinions and from there

to the unconscious motives of thought must necessarily occur. In what follows we wish to point out only a few of the most significant social factors which are operating in this direction.

Above all, the multiplicity of ways of thinking cannot become a problem in periods when social stability underlies and guarantees the internal unity of a world-view. As long as the same meanings of words, the same ways of deducing ideas, are inculcated from childhood on into every member of the group, divergent thought-processes cannot exist in that society. Even a gradual modification in ways of thinking (where it should happen to arise), does not become perceptible to the members of a group who live in a stable situation as long as the tempo in the adaptations of ways of thinking to new problems is so slow that it extends over several generations. In such a case, one and the same generation in the course of its own life span can scarcely become aware that a change is taking place.

But in addition to the general dynamics of the historical process, factors of quite another sort must enter before the multiplicity of the ways of thinking will become noticeable and emerge as a theme for reflection. Thus it is primarily the intensification of social mobility which destroys the earlier illusion, prevalent in a static society, that all things can change, but thought remains eternally the same. And what is more, the two forms of social mobility, horizontal and vertical, operate in different ways to reveal this multiplicity of styles of thought. Horizontal mobility (movement from one position to another or from one country to another without changing social status) shows us that different peoples think differently. As long, however, as the traditions of one's national and local group remain unbroken, one remains so attached to its customary ways of thinking that the ways of thinking which are perceived in other groups are regarded as curiosities, errors, ambiguities, or heresies. At this stage one does not doubt either the correctness of one's own traditions of thought or the unity and uniformity of thought in general.

Only when horizontal mobility is accompanied by intensive vertical mobility, i.e. rapid movement between strata in the sense of social ascent and descent, is the belief in the general and eternal validity of one's own thought-forms shaken. Vertical mobility is the decisive factor in making persons uncertain and sceptical of their traditional view of the world. It is, of course, true that even in static societies with very slight vertical mobility, different strata within the same society have had different ways

of experiencing the world. It is the merit of Max Weber [1] to have clearly shown in his sociology of religion how often the same religion is variously experienced by peasants, artisans, merchants, nobles, and intellectuals. In a society organized along the lines of closed castes or ranks the comparative absence of vertical mobility served either to isolate from each other the divergent world-views or if, for example, they experienced a common religion, according to their different contexts of life, they interpreted it in a different way. This accounts for the fact that the diversity of modes of thought of different castes did not converge in one and the same mind and hence could not become a problem. From a sociological point of view, the decisive change takes place when that stage of historical development is reached in which the previously isolated strata begin to communicate with one another and a certain social circulation sets in. The most significant stage of this communication is reached when the forms of thought and experience, which had hitherto developed independently, enter into one and the same consciousness impelling the mind to discover the irreconcilability of the conflicting conceptions of the world.

In a well stabilized society the mere infiltration of the modes of thought of the lower strata into the higher would not mean very much since the bare perception by the dominant group of possible variations in thinking would not result in their being intellectually shaken. As long as a society is stabilized on the basis of authority, and social prestige is accorded only to the achievements of the upper stratum, this class has little cause to call into question its own social existence and the value of its achievements. Apart from a considerable social ascent, it is not until we have a general democratization that the rise of the lower strata allows their thinking to acquire public significance.[2] This process of democratization first makes it possible for the ways of thinking of the lower strata, which formerly had no public validity, to acquire validity and prestige. When the stage of democratization has been reached, the techniques of thinking and the ideas of the lower strata are for the first time in a position to confront

[1] Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, vol. i, chap. iv, § 7, *Religionssoziologie: Stände, Klassen und Religion* (Tübingen, 1925), pp. 267–296.

[2] Thus, for example, in our own time, pragmatism, as will be seen later, when viewed sociologically, constitutes the legitimation of a technique of thinking and of an epistemology which has elevated the criteria of everyday experience to the level of " academic " discussion.

the ideas of the dominant strata on the same level of validity. And now, too, for the first time these ideas and modes of thought are capable of impelling the person who thinks within their framework to subject the objects of his world to a fundamental questioning. It is with this clashing of modes of thought, each of which has the same claims to representational validity, that for the first time there is rendered possible the emergence of the question which is so fateful, but also so fundamental in the history of thought, namely, how it is possible that identical human thought-processes concerned with the same world produce divergent conceptions of that world. And from this point it is only a step further to ask : Is it not possible that the thought-processes which are involved here are not at all identical ? May it not be found, when one has examined all the possibilities of human thought, that there are numerous alternative paths which can be followed ?

Was it not this process of social ascent which in the Athenian democracy called forth the first great surge of scepticism in the history of Occidental thought ? Were not the Sophists of the Greek Enlightenment the expression of an attitude of doubt which arose essentially out of the fact that in their thinking about every object, two modes of explanation collided ? On the one hand was the mythology which was the way of thinking of a dominant nobility already doomed to decline. On the other hand was the more analytical habit of thought of an urban artisan lower stratum, which was in the process of moving upwards. Inasmuch as these two forms of interpreting the world converged in the thought of the Sophists, and since for every moral decision there were available at least two standards, and for every cosmic and social happening at least two explanations, it is no wonder that they had a sceptical notion of the value of human thought. It is therefore pointless to censure them in schoolmaster fashion for having been sceptics in their epistemological efforts. They simply had the courage to express what every person who was really characteristic of the epoch felt, namely, that the previous unambiguity of norms and interpretations had been shattered, and that a satisfactory solution was to be found only in a thoroughgoing questioning and thinking through of the contradictions. This general uncertainty was by no means a symptom of a world doomed to general decay, but it was rather the beginning of a wholesome process which marked a crisis leading to recovery.

Was it not, furthermore, the great virtue of Socrates that he had the courage to descend into the abyss of this scepticism ? Was he not originally also a Sophist who took up the technique of raising questions and then raising further questions, and made it his own ? And did he not overcome the crisis by questioning even more radically than the Sophists and thus arrive at an intellectual resting-point which, at least for the mentality of that epoch, showed itself to be a reliable foundation ? It is interesting to observe that thereby the world of norms and of being came to occupy the central place in his inquiry. Furthermore, he was at least as intensively concerned with the question as to how individuals are able to think of and judge the same facts in different ways as he was with the facts themselves. Even at this stage in the history of thought it becomes apparent that in various periods the problems of thinking can be solved not solely by preoccupation with the object but rather only through discovering why opinions concerning them really differ.

In addition to those social factors which account for the early unity and subsequent multiplicity in the dominant forms of thought, another important factor should be mentioned. In every society there are social groups whose special task it is to provide an interpretation of the world for that society. We call these the " intelligentsia ". The more static a society is, the more likely is it that this stratum will acquire a well-defined status or the position of a caste in that society. Thus the magicians, the Brahmins, the medieval clergy are to be regarded as intellectual strata, each of which in its society enjoyed a monopolistic control over the moulding of that society's world-view, and over either the reconstruction or the reconciliation of the differences in the naïvely formed world-views of the other strata. The sermon, the confession, the lesson, are, in this sense, means by which reconciliation of the different conceptions of the world takes place at less sophisticated levels of social development.

This intellectual stratum, organized as a caste and monopolizing the right to preach, teach, and interpret the world is conditioned by the force of two social factors. The more it makes itself the exponent of a thoroughly organized collectivity (e.g. the Church), the more its thinking tends towards " scholasticism ". It must give a dogmatically binding force to modes of thought which formerly were valid only for a sect and thereby sanction the ontology and epistemology implicit in this mode of thought. The necessity of having to present a unified front to outsiders

compels this transition. The same result may also be brought about by the possibility that the concentration of power within the social structure will be so pronounced that uniformity of thought and experience can be imposed upon the members of at least one's own caste with greater success than heretofore.

The second characteristic of this monopolistic type of thought is its relative remoteness from the open conflicts of everyday life ; hence it is also " scholastic " in this sense, i.e. academic and lifeless. This type of thought does not arise primarily from the struggle with concrete problems of life nor from trial and error, nor from experiences in mastering nature and society, but rather much more from its own need for systematization, which always refers the facts which emerge in the religious as well as in other spheres of life back to given traditional and intellectually uncontrolled premises. The antagonisms which emerge in these discussions do not embody the conflict of various modes of experience so much as various positions of power within the same social structure, which have at the time identified themselves with the different possible interpretations of the dogmatized traditional " truth ". The dogmatic content of the premises with which these divergent groups start and which this thought then seeks in different ways to justify turns out for the most part to be a matter of accident, if judged by the criteria of factual evidence. It is completely arbitrary in so far as it depends upon which sect happens to be successful, in accordance with historical-political destiny, in making its own intellectual and experiential traditions the traditions of the entire clerical caste of the church.

From a sociological point of view the decisive fact of modern times, in contrast with the situation during the Middle Ages, is that this monopoly of the ecclesiastical interpretation of the world which was held by the priestly caste is broken, and in the place of a closed and thoroughly organized stratum of intellectuals, a free intelligentsia has arisen. Its chief characteristic is that it is increasingly recruited from constantly varying social strata and life-situations, and that its mode of thought is no longer subject to regulation by a caste-like organization. Due to the absence of a social organization of their own, the intellectuals have allowed those ways of thinking and experiencing to get a hearing which openly competed with one another in the larger world of the other strata. When one considers further that with the renunciation of the monopolistic privileges of a caste type of existence, free competition began to dominate the modes of intellectual production, one understands why, to the extent that

they were in competition, the intellectuals adopted in an ever more pronounced fashion the most various modes of thought and experience available in society and played them off against one another. They did this inasmuch as they had to compete for the favour of a public which, unlike the public of the clergy, was no longer accessible to them without their own efforts. This competition for the favour of various public groups was accentuated because the distinctive modes of experiencing and thinking of each attained increasing public expression and validity.

In this process the intellectual's illusion that there is only one way of thinking disappears. The intellectual is now no longer, as formerly, a member of a caste or rank whose scholastic manner of thought represents for him thought as such. In this relatively simple process is to be sought the explanation for the fact that the fundamental questioning of thought in modern times does not begin until the collapse of the intellectual monopoly of the clergy. The almost unanimously accepted world-view which had been artificially maintained fell apart the moment the socially monopolistic position of its producers was destroyed. With the liberation of the intellectuals from the rigorous organization of the church, other ways of interpreting the world were increasingly recognized.

The disruption of the intellectual monopoly of the church brought about a sudden flowering of an unexampled intellectual richness. But at the same time we must attribute to the organizational disintegration of the unitary church the fact that the belief in the unity and eternal nature of thought, which had persisted since classical antiquity, was again shaken. The origins of the profound disquietude of the present day reach back to this period, even though in most recent times additional causes of a quite different nature have entered into the process. Out of this first upsurge of the profound disquietude of modern man there emerged those fundamentally new modes of thought and investigation, the epistemological, the psychological, and the sociological, without which to-day we could not even formulate our problem. For this reason we will attempt in the next section to show, in its main lines at least, how the many forms of questioning and investigation available to us arose from this unitary social situation.[1]

[1] On the nature of monopolistic thought, cf. K. Mannheim, "Die Bedeutung der Konkurrenz im Gebiete des Geistigen." Report delivered at the Sixth Congress of the German Sociological Society in Zurich (*Schriften der deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie*, vol. vi (Tübingen, 1929)).

3. The Origin of the Modern Epistemological, Psychological, and Sociological Points of View

Epistemology was the first significant philosophical product of the breakdown of the unitary world-view with which the modern era was ushered in. In this instance, as in antiquity, it was the first reflection of the unrest which emerged from the fact that those thinkers who were penetrating to the very foundations of thought were discovering not only numerous world-views but also numerous ontological orders. Epistemology sought to eliminate this uncertainty by taking its point of departure not from a dogmatically taught theory of existence, nor from a world-order which was validated by a higher type of knowledge, but from an analysis of the knowing subject.

All epistemological speculation is oriented within the polarity of object and subject.[1] Either it starts with the world of objects, which in one way or another it dogmatically presupposes as familiar to all, and with this as a basis explains the position of the subject in this world-order, deriving therefrom his cognitive powers; or else it starts with the subject as the immediate and unquestioned datum and seeks to derive from him the possibility of valid knowledge. In periods in which the objective world-view remains more or less unshaken, and in epochs which succeed in presenting one unambiguously perceivable world-order, there exists the tendency to base the existence of the knowing human subject and his intellectual capacities on objective factors. Thus in the Middle Ages, which not only believed in an unambiguous world-order but which also thought that it knew the "existential value" to be attributed to every object in the hierarchy of things, there prevailed an explanation of the value of human capacities and thought which was based on the world of objects. But after the breakdown which we described, the conception of order in the world of objects which had been guaranteed by the dominance of the church became problematical, and there remained no alternative but to turn about and to take the opposite road, and, with the subject as the point of departure, to determine the nature and the value of the human cognitive act, attempting thereby to find an anchorage for objective existence in the knowing subject.

Although precursors for this tendency are already to be found

[1] Cf. K. Mannheim, *Die Strukturanalyse der Erkenntnistheorie*, Ergänzungsband der Kant-Studien, No. 57 (Berlin, 1922).

in medieval thought, it fully emerged for the first time in the rationalistic current of French and German philosophy from Descartes through Leibnitz to Kant on the one hand, and in the more psychologically oriented epistemology of Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume on the other. This was above all else the meaning of Descartes' intellectual experiment, of the exemplary struggle in which he attempted to question all traditional theories in order, finally, to arrive at the no longer questionable *cogito ergo sum.* This was the only point from which he could again undertake anew to lay the foundations for a world-view.

All these attempts presuppose the more or less explicit consideration that the subject is more immediately accessible to us than the object which has become too ambiguous as a result of the many divergent interpretations to which it has been subjected. For this reason we must, wherever possible, empirically reconstruct the genesis of thought in the subject which is more accessible to our control. In the mere preference for the empirical observations and genetic criteria which gradually became supreme, the will to the destruction of the authoritarian principle was revealed in operation. It represents a centrifugal tendency in opposition to the church as the official interpreter of the universe. Only that has validity which I can control in my own perception, which is corroborated in my own experimental activity, or which I myself can produce or at least conceptually construct as producible.

Consequently, in place of the traditional, ecclesiastically guaranteed story of creation, there emerged a conception of the formation of the world, the various parts of which are subject to intellectual control. This conceptual model of the producibility of the world-view from the cognitive act led to the solution of the epistemological problem. It was hoped that through insight into the origins of cognitive representation one could arrive at some notion of the role and significance of the subject for the act of knowing and of the truth-value of human knowledge in general.

It was indeed appreciated that this circuitous approach through the subject was a substitute and a makeshift in the absence of anything better. A complete solution of the problem would be possible only if an extra-human and infallible mind were to render a judgment about the value of our thinking. But precisely this method had failed in the past, because the farther one progressed in the criticism of earlier theories, the more clear did it become that those philosophies which made the most absolute claims

were the most likely to fall into easily perceivable self-deceptions. Hence, the method which meanwhile had proved itself the most suitable one in the natural orientation to the world and in the natural sciences, namely the empirical method, came to be preferred.

When, in the course of development, the philological and historical sciences were elaborated, the possibility arose in the analysis of thought of also drawing upon the historically evolving conceptions of the world and of understanding this wealth of philosophical and religious world-views in terms of the genetic process through which they had come into existence. Thus thought came to be examined at very different levels of its development and in quite different historical situations. It became evident that much more could be said about the manner in which the structure of the subject influenced his world-view when one made use of animal psychology, child psychology, the psychology of language, the psychology of primitive peoples, and the psychology of intellectual history than when one set about it with a purely speculative analysis of the achievements of a transcendent subject.

The epistemological recourse to the subject rendered possible in this way the emergence of a psychology which became ever more precise, including a psychology of thought which, as we have indicated above, broke up into numerous fields of specialization. However, the more precise this empirical psychology became, the greater the appreciation of the scope of empirical observation, the more evident it became that the subject was by no means such a safe point of departure for the attainment of a new conception of the world as had previously been assumed. It is indeed true, in a certain sense, that inner experience is more immediately given than external experience, and that the inner connection between experiences can be more surely comprehended, if, among other things, one is able to have a sympathetic understanding of the motivations which produce certain actions. However, it was nonetheless clear that one could not entirely avoid the risks involved in an ontology. The psyche, too, with all its inwardly immediately perceivable "experiences" is a segment of reality. And the knowledge of these experiences which it acquires presupposes a theory of reality, an ontology. However, just as such an ontology has become more ambiguous, as regards the outer world, so it became no less ambiguous as regards psychic reality.

The type of psychology which connected the Middle Ages with modern times, and which drew its contents from the self-observation of the religious man, does indeed still operate with certain concepts rich with content which evidence the continuing influence of a religious ontology of the soul. We are thinking, in this connection, of psychology as it has grown out of the inner struggle over the choice between good and evil, which was now conceived of as occurring in the subject. Such a psychology was developed in the conflicts of conscience and in the scepticism of men like Pascal and Montaigne down to Kierkegaard. Here we still find, pregnant with meaning, certain orientational concepts of an ontological sort such as despair, sin, salvation, and loneliness, which derive a certain richness from experience because every experience, which from its very beginning, is directed towards a religious goal, has its concrete content. Nonetheless these experiences, too, with the passage of time became more bare of content, thinner, and more formal as in the outer world their original frame of reference, their religious ontology, became enfeebled. A society in which diverse groups can no longer agree on the meaning of God, Life, and Man, will be equally unable to decide unanimously what is to be understood by sin, despair, salvation, or loneliness. Recourse to the subject along these lines provided no real assistance. Only he who immerses himself in his own self in such a manner that he does not destroy all of the elements of personal meaning and of value is in a position to find answers to questions that involve meaning. In the meantime, however, as a result of this radical formalization, scientific psychic inward observation took on new forms. Fundamentally this psychic inward observation involved the same process which characterized the experiencing and thinking through of the objects of the external world. Such meaning-giving interpretations with qualitatively rich contents (as, for instance, sin, despair, loneliness, Christian love) were replaced by formalized entities such as the feeling of anxiety, the perception of inner conflict, the experiencing of isolation, and the " libido ". These latter sought to apply interpretive schemes derived from mechanics to the inner experience of man. The aim here was not so much to comprehend as precisely as possible the inner contentual richness of experiences as they coexist in the individual and together operate towards the achievement of a meaningful goal ; the attempt was rather to exclude all distinctive elements in experience from the content in order that, wherever possible,

the conception of psychic events should approximate the simple scheme of mechanics (position, motion, cause, effect). The problem becomes not how a person understands himself in terms of his own ideals and norms and how, against the background of such norms, his deeds and renunciations are given their meaning, but rather how an external situation can, with an ascertainable degree of probability, mechanically call forth an inner reaction. The category of external causality was increasingly used, operating with the idea of a regular succession of two formally simplified events, as is illustrated in the schema: "Fear arises when something unusual occurs," in which it was purposely overlooked that every type of fear changes completely with its content (fear in face of uncertainty and fear in face of an animal), and that the unusual, too, varies entirely in accord with the context in which things are usual. But it was precisely the formal abstraction of the common characteristics of these qualitatively differentiated phenomena that was sought after.

Or else the category of function was employed in the sense that single phenomena were interpreted from the point of view of their role in the formal functioning of the whole psychic mechanism, as, for instance, that when mental conflicts are interpreted, as, basically, the result of two unintegrated contradictory tendencies in the psychic sphere, they are the expressions of the subject's maladjustment. Their function is to compel the subject to reorganize his process of adaptation and to arrive at a new equilibrium.

It would be reactionary, with reference to the fruitful development of science, to deny the cognitive value of simplifying procedures such as these which are easily controllable and which are applicable, with a high degree of probability, to a great mass of phenomena. The fruitfulness of these formalizing sciences, working in terms of causes and functions, is still far from exhausted; and it would be harmful to impede their development. It is one thing to test a fruitful line of investigation and another to regard it as the only path to the scientific treatment of an object. In so far as the latter is the point at issue, it is already clear to-day that the formal approach alone does not exhaust what can be known of the world and particularly of the psychic life of human beings.

The interconnections of meaning which were in this procedure heuristically excluded (in the interests of scientific simplification) so that formal and easily definable entities could be arrived

at, are not recaptured by a mere further perfection of formalization through the discovery of correlations and functions. It may indeed be necessary, for the sake of the precise observability of the formal sequence of experiences, to discard the concrete contents of experiences and values. It would, however, constitute a type of scientific fetishism to believe that such a methodical purification actually replaces the original richness of experience. It is even more erroneous to think that a scientific extrapolation and abstract accentuation of one aspect of a phenomenon, for the sole reason that it has been thought through in this form, is able to enrich the original life-experience.

Although we may know a great deal about the conditions under which conflicts arise, we may still know nothing about the inner situation of living human beings, and how, when their values are shattered, they lose their bearings and strive again to find themselves. Just as the most exact theory of cause and function does not answer the question as to who I actually am, what I actually am, or what it means to be a human being, so there can never arise out of it that interpretation of one's self and the world demanded by even the simplest action based on some evaluative decision.

The mechanistic and functionalistic theory is highly valuable as a current in psychological research. It fails, however, when it is placed in the total context of life-experience because it says nothing concerning the meaningful goal of conduct, and is therefore unable to interpret the elements of conduct with reference to it. The mechanistic mode of thought is of assistance only as long as the goal or the value is given from another source and the "means" alone are to be treated. The most important role of thought in life consists, however, in providing guidance for conduct when decisions must be made. Every real decision (such as one's evaluation of other persons or how society should be organized) implies a judgment concerning good and evil, concerning the meaning of life and mind.

At this point we encounter the paradox that this extrapolation of the formalized elements by means of general mechanics and the theory of function originally arose to help men in their activities to attain their goals more easily. The world of things and of the mind was mechanistically and functionally examined in order, through comparative analysis, to arrive at its ultimate constituent elements, and then to regroup them in accord with the goal of activity. When the analytical procedure was first used,

the end or goal prescribed by the activity was still in existence (often composed of fragments of an earlier, religiously understood world). Men strove to know the world so that they could mould it to conform to this ultimate goal; society was analysed so as to arrive at a form of social life more just or otherwise more pleasing to God; men were concerned with the soul in order to control the path to salvation. But the farther men advanced in analysis, the more the goal disappeared from their field of vision, so that to-day a research worker might say with Nietzsche "I have forgotten why I ever began" (*Ich habe meine Gründe vergessen*). If to-day one inquires concerning the ends served by analysis, the question is not to be answered with reference to either nature or the soul or society, or else we formally posit a purely technical, psychical, or social optimum condition, as, for example, the most "frictionless functioning".[1] This goal appears as the only one when, for instance, disregarding all his complicated observations and hypotheses, one asks a psychoanalyst to what end he cures his patients. In most cases he has no other answer than the notion of an optimum of adaptation. As to what this optimum is, however, he can say nothing on the basis of his science alone, since every ultimate meaningful end has been eliminated from it from the very first.

Thereby another aspect of the problem is revealed. Without evaluative conceptions, without the minimum of a meaningful goal, we can do nothing in either the sphere of the social or the sphere of the psychic. By this we mean that even when one takes a purely causal and functional point of view one discovers only afterwards what sense there was originally concealed in the ontology on which one proceeded. It guarded against the atomization of the experience into isolated observations, i.e. atomization from the standpoint of the activity. Expressed in terms of modern Gestalt theory, the meanings which our ontology gives us served to integrate the units of conduct and to enable

[1] This may account for the deeper truth of the regulation that heads of ministries in parliamentary states must not be chosen from the ranks of the administrative staff, but rather from among the political leaders. The administrative bureaucrat, like every specialist and expert, inclines to lose sight of the context of his action and the end goal. It is assumed here that he who embodies the freely formed integration of the collective will in public life, the political leader, can integrate the available means which are necessary for the actions in question in a more organic fashion than the administrative expert who in questions of policy has been deliberately neutralized. Cf. section on the sociology of bureaucratic thinking, pp. 105 ff.

us to see in a configurative context the individual observational elements which otherwise would tend to remain discreet.

Even if all the meaning conveyed by the magical-religious view of the world had been " false ", it still served—when viewed from a purely functional standpoint—to make coherent the fragments of the reality of inner psychic as well as objective external experience, and to place them with reference to a certain complex of conduct. We see ever more clearly that from whatever source we get our meanings, whether they be true or false, they have a certain psychological-sociological function, namely to fix the attention of those men who wish to do something in common upon a certain " definition of the situation ". A situation is constituted as such when it is defined in the same way for the members of the group. It may be true or false when one group calls another heretics, and as such struggles against them, but it is only through this definition that the struggle is a social situation. It may be true or false that a group struggles only to realize a fascist or a communist society, but it is only by means of this meaning-giving, evaluating definition that events produce a situation where activity and counteractivity are distinguishable, and the totality of events are articulated into a process. The juxtaposition *ex post facto* of elements voided of meaningful content does not bring home the unity of conduct. As a result of the extensive exclusion of meaningful elements from psychological theory, it becomes more and more evident that in psychology, too, psychic situations, to say nothing of inner life histories, cannot be perceived without meaningful context.

Furthermore, from a purely functionalist point of view, the derivation of our meanings, whether they be true or false, plays an indispensable role, namely, it socializes events for a group. We belong to a group not only because we are born into it, not merely because we profess to belong to it, nor finally because we give it our loyalty and allegiance, but primarily because we see the world and certain things in the world the way it does (i.e. in terms of the meanings of the group in question). In every concept, in every concrete meaning, there is contained a crystallization of the experiences of a certain group. When someone says " kingdom ", he is using the term in the sense in which it has meaning for a certain group. Another for whom the kingdom is only an organization, as for instance an administrative organization such as is involved in a postal system, is not participating in those collective actions of the group in which the

former meaning is taken for granted. In every concept, however, there is not only a fixation of individuals with reference to a definite group of a certain kind and its action, but every source from which we derive meaning and interpretation acts also as a stabilizing factor on the possibilities of experiencing and knowing objects with reference to the central goal of action which directs us.

The world of external objects and of psychic experience appears to be in a continuous flux. Verbs are more adequate symbols for this situation than nouns. The fact that we give names to things which are in flux implies inevitably a certain stabilization oriented along the lines of collective activity. The derivation of our meanings emphasizes and stabilizes that aspect of things which is relevant to activity and covers up, in the interest of collective action, the perpetually fluid process underlying all things. It excludes other configurational organizations of the data which tend in different directions. Every concept represents a sort of taboo against other possible sources of meaning—simplifying and unifying the manifoldness of life for the sake of action.

It is not improbable that the formalizing and functionalizing view of things became possible in our time only because the previously dominant taboos, which made man impervious to meanings derived from other sources, were already losing their force after the breakdown of the intellectual monopoly of the church. The opportunity gradually arose under these circumstances for every oppositional group openly to reveal to the world those contradictory meanings which corresponded to their own peculiarly conceived understanding of the world. What was a king for one was a tyrant for another. It has already been pointed out, however, that too many conflicting sources from which meanings with regard to a given object are derived in the same society leads in the end to the dissolution of every system of meaning. In such a society, internally divided with regard to any concrete system of meaning, consensus can be established only with reference to the formalized elements of the objects (e.g. the definition of monarch which asserts: "The monarch is he who in the eyes of a majority of persons in a country legally possesses the right of exercising absolute power"). In this and similar definitions everything substantial, every evaluation for which a consensus can no longer be found, is reinterpreted in functional terms.

Returning then to our discussion of the origins of modern psychology with the subject as the point of departure, it is now clear that the original difficulty, which was to have been solved through recourse to and concentration on the subject, was not thereby obviated. It is true that much that is new was discovered by the new empirical methods. They enabled us to gain insight into the psychic genesis of many cultural phenomena, but the answers which were brought forward deflected our attention from the fundamental question concerning the existence of mind in the order of reality. Especially was the unity of the mind as well as that of the person lost through the functionalization and mechanization of psychic phenomena. A psychology without a psyche cannot take the place of an ontology. Such a psychology was itself the outcome of the fact that men were attempting to think in the framework of categories which strove to negate every evaluation, every trace of common meaning, or of total configuration. What may be valuable for a specialized discipline as a research hypothesis may, however, be fatal for the conduct of human beings. The uncertainty which arises from relying upon scientific psychology in practical life becomes recurrently obvious as soon as the pedagogue or the political leader turns to it for guidance. The impression which he gets upon such an occasion is that psychology exists in another world and records its observations for citizens living in some society other than our own. This form of modern man's experience, which because of a highly differentiated division of labour tends towards directionlessness, finds its counterpart in the rootlessness of a psychology with whose categories not even the simplest life-process can be thought through. That this psychology actually constitutes a trained incapacity to deal with problems of the mind accounts for the fact that it offers no foothold to living human beings in their daily life.

Thus two fundamentally different tendencies characterize modern psychology. Both became possible because the medieval world which gave a single set of meanings to men in the Western world was in the process of dissolution. The first of these is the tendency to look behind every meaning and to understand it in terms of its genesis in the subject (the genetic point of view). The second tendency consists in the attempt to construct a sort of mechanical science of the elements of psychic experience which have been formalized and emptied of meaning (psychic mechanics). It becomes evident here that the mechanistic

thought-model is not, as was originally supposed, confined to the world of mechanical objects. The mechanistic thought-model represents primarily a kind of first approximation to objects in general. Here the aim is not the exact comprehension of qualitive peculiarities and unique constellations, but rather the determination of the most obvious regularities and principles of order obtaining between formalized simplified elements. We have traced out this last-mentioned method in detail and seen how the mechanistic method, in spite of the concrete achievements for which we are indebted to it, has, from the point of view of life-orientation and conduct, contributed very much to the general insecurity of modern man. The acting man must know who he is, and the ontology of psychic life fulfils a certain function in action. To the extent that mechanistic psychology and its parallel in actual life, the social impulsion towards all-embracing mechanization, negated these ontological values, they destroyed an important element in the self-orientation of human beings in their everyday life.

We should like to turn now to the genetic approach. Here we should first point out that the genetic point of view, which is bound up with the psychological approach, has contributed in many ways to a deeper understanding of life in the sense above indicated. The dogmatic exponents of classical logic and philosophy are accustomed to maintain that the genesis of an idea has nothing to say concerning its validity or meaning. They always evoke the hackneyed example to the effect that our knowledge of the life of Pythagoras and of his inner conflicts, etc., is of little value in understanding the Pythagorean proposition. I do not believe, however, that this point holds for all intellectual accomplishments. I believe that from the standpoint of strict interpretation, we are infinitely enriched when we attempt to understand the biblical sentence, " The last shall be first," as the psychic expression of the revolt of oppressed strata. I believe that we shall understand it better if, as Nietzsche and others have indicated in various ways, we consider and become aware of the significance of resentment in the formation of moral judgments. In this case, for example, one could say in the case of Christianity, it was resentment which gave the lower strata courage to emancipate themselves, at least psychically, from the domination of an unjust system of values and to set up their own in opposition to it. We do not intend to raise the question here whether with the aid of this

psychological-genetic analysis which deals with the value-generating function of resentment we can decide whether the Christians or the Roman ruling classes were in the right. In any case, through this analysis we are led more deeply into the comprehension of the meaning of the sentence. It is not irrelevant for an understanding of it to know that the phrase was not uttered by anybody in general and was not addressed to men in general, but rather that it has a real appeal only for those who, like the Christians, are in some manner oppressed and who, at the same time, under the impulse of resentment, wish to free themselves from prevailing injustices. The interconnection between psychic genesis, the motivation which leads to meaning, and the meaning itself is, in the case just cited, different from that which exists in the Pythagorean propositions. The specially concocted examples which logicians adduce may under certain circumstances make one unreceptive to the deepest differences between one meaning and another and may lead to generalizations which obscure relevant relationships.

The psychogenetic approach may then contribute in a great many cases to a deeper understanding of meaning, where we are concerned not with the most abstract and formal interrelationships but rather with meanings, the motivation of which can be sympathetically experienced, or with a complex of meaningful conduct, which can be understood in terms of its motivational structure and experiential context. So, for example, when I know what a man was as a child, what severe conflicts he experienced and in which situations they occurred and how he solved them, I will know more about him than if I merely had a few bare details of his external life-history. I will know the context[1] from which novelty is produced in him and in the light of which every detail of his experience will have to be interpreted. It is the great achievement of the psychogenetic method that it destroyed the earlier mechanical conception which treated norms and cultural values as material things. When confronted with a sacred text, the genetic method has replaced the formally acquiescent obedience to a norm with the living appreciation of the process in which norms and cultural values first arise and with which they must be kept in continual contact in order that they may be ever newly interpreted and

[1] It should be noted how the genetic point of view emphasizes interdependence in contrast with the mechanistic approach which concerns itself with the atomization of the elements of experience.

mastered. It has shown thereby that the life of a psychic phenomenon is the phenomenon itself. The meaning of history and life is contained in their becoming and in their flux. These insights were first stumbled upon by the Romantics and by Hegel, but since then have had to be rediscovered again and again.

There was, however, from the very beginning a two-fold limit to this concept of psychic genesis as it gradually developed and penetrated into the cultural sciences (such as the history of religions, literary history, art history, etc.); and this limit threatened in time to become a definite restriction on the value of this approach.

The most essential limitation of the psychogenetic approach is the important observation that every meaning is to be understood in the light of its genesis and in the original context of life-experience which forms its background. But this observation contains within it the injurious constriction that this approach will be found only in an individualistic application. In most cases the genesis of a meaning has been sought in the individual context of experience rather than in its collective context. Thus, for example, if one had before one some idea (let us take the above-mentioned case of the transformation of a hierarchy of moral values as it is expressed in the sentence: "The last shall be first") and wished to explain it genetically, one would fasten upon the individual biography of the author and attempt to understand the idea exclusively on the basis of the special events and motivations of the author's personal history. Now it is clear that very much can be done with this method, for just as the experiences that truly motivate me have their original source and locus in my own life-history, just so the author's life-history is the locus of his experiences. But it is also clear that while it may be sufficient for the genetic explanation of a quite special individual mode of behaviour to go back to the early period of an individual's history (as would, for instance, be done by psycho-analysis to explain the symptoms of later developments in character from the experiences of early childhood), for a mode of behaviour of social significance, such as the transvaluation of values which transforms the whole system of life of a society in all its ramifications, preoccupation with the purely individual life-history and its analysis is not sufficient. The transvaluation, as indicated in the sentence above, has its roots basically in a group situation in which hundreds and thousands of persons, each in his own way,

participate in the overthrow of the existing society. Each of these persons prepares and executes this transvaluation in the sense that he acts in a new way in a whole complex of life-situations which impinge upon him. The genetic method of explanation, if it goes deep enough, cannot in the long run limit itself to the individual life-history, but must piece together so much that finally it touches on the interdependence of the individual life-history and the more inclusive group situation. For the individual life-history is only a component in a series of mutually intertwined life-histories which have their common theme in this upheaval; the particular new motivation of a single individual is a part of a motivational complex in which many persons participate in various ways. It was the merit of the sociological point of view that it set alongside the individual genesis of meaning the genesis from the context of group life.

The two methods of studying cultural phenomena dealt with above, the epistemological and the psychological, had in common an attempt to explain meaning from its genesis in the subject. What is important in this case is not so much whether they were thinking of the concrete individual or of a generalized mind as such, but that in both cases the individual mind was conceived as separate from the group. Thereby they unwittingly brought false assumptions into the fundamental problems of epistemology and psychology which the sociological approach has had to correct. What is most important about the latter is that it puts an end to the fiction of the detachment of the individual from the group, within the matrix of which the individual thinks and experiences.

The fiction of the isolated and self-sufficient individual underlies in various forms the individualistic epistemology and genetic psychology. Epistemology operated with this isolated and self-sufficient individual as if from the very first he possessed in essence all the capacities characteristic of human beings, including that of pure knowledge, and as if he produced his knowledge of the world from within himself alone, through mere juxtaposition with the external world. Similarly in the individualistic developmental psychology, the individual passes of necessity through certain stages of development in the course of which the external physical and social environment have no other function than to release these preformed capacities of the individual. Both of these theories grew out of the soil of an exaggerated theoretical individualism (such as was to be found

in the period of the Renaissance and of individualistic liberalism) which could have been produced only in a social situation in which the original connection between individual and group had been lost sight of. Frequently in such social situations the observer loses sight of the role of society in the moulding of the individual to the extent that he derives most of the traits, which are evidently only possible as the result of a common life and the interaction between individuals, from the original nature of the individual or from the germ plasm. (We attack this fiction not from some ultimate philosophical point of view but because it simply draws incorrect data into the picture of the genesis of knowledge and experience.)

In actuality it is far from correct to assume that an individual of more or less fixed absolute capacities confronts the world and in striving for the truth constructs a world-view out of the data of his experience. Nor can we believe that he then compares his world-view with that of other individuals who have gained theirs in a similarly independent fashion, and in a sort of discussion the true world-view is brought to light and accepted by the others. In contrast to this, it is much more correct to say that knowledge is from the very beginning a co-operative process of group life, in which everyone unfolds his knowledge within the framework of a common fate, a common activity, and the overcoming of common difficulties (in which, however, each has a different share). Accordingly the products of the cognitive process are already, at least in part, differentiated because not every possible aspect of the world comes within the purview of the members of a group, but only those out of which difficulties and problems for the group arise. And even this common world (not shared by any outside groups in the same way) appears differently to the subordinate groups within the larger group. It appears differently because the subordinate groups and strata in a functionally differentiated society have a different experiential approach to the common contents of the objects of their world. In the intellectual mastery of life problems, each is allotted different segments with which each deals quite differently according to his different life-interests. The degree in which the individualistic conception of the problem of knowledge gives a false picture of collective knowing corresponds to what would occur if the technique, mode of work, and productivity of an internally highly specialized factory of 2,000 workers were thought of as if each of the 2,000 workers worked in a separate

cubicle, performed the same operations for himself at the same time and turned out each individual product from beginning to end by himself. Actually, of course, the workers do not do the same thing in parallel fashion but rather, through a division of functions, they collectively bring the total product into existence.

Let us ask ourselves for a moment what is lacking in the older theory in the instance of this individualistic re-interpretation of a process of collective work and achievement. In the first place, the framework which, in a real division of labour, determines the character of the work of every individual from the chairman of the board of directors down to the very last apprentice and which integrates in an intelligent manner the nature of each partial product turned out by the individual worker, is simply overlooked. The failure to observe the social character of knowing and experiencing was not primarily due, as many believe, to disregard for the role of the "mass" and over-emphasis of that of the great man. Its explanation is rather to be sought in the fact that the original social nexus in which every particular individual experience and perception in the group is nourished and developed was never analysed and appreciated.[1] This original interdependence of the elements of the life-process, which is analogous to but not identical with the division of labour, is different in an agrarian society from what it is in the urban world. Furthermore, within the latter the different groups participating in city life at any one time have different cognitive problems and arrive at their experiences through different avenues even with reference to the very same objects. Only when the point of view is introduced into the genetic approach from the very beginning, according to which a group of 2,000 persons do not perceive the same thing 2,000 times, but in which, in accord with the inner articulation of group life and with various functions and interests, subgroups arise which act and think collectively with and against each

[1] There is nothing more futile than to suppose that the contrast between the individualistic and the sociological points of view is the same as that between the "great personality" and the "mass". There is nothing in the sociological approach that would exclude its concern with the description of the significance of the great personality in the social process. The real distinction is that the individualistic point of view is in most cases unable to see the significance of various forms of social life for the development of individual capacities, while the sociological viewpoint seeks from the very beginning to interpret individual activity in all spheres within the context of group experience.

other—only when things are seen from this angle can we achieve an understanding of how, in the same inclusive society, diverse meanings can arise due to the divergent social origins of the different members of the whole society.

An additional unconscious distortion committed by classical epistemology in its characterization of the genesis of the cognitive process is that it proceeds as if knowledge arose out of an act of purely theoretical contemplation. Here it seems to be elevating a marginal case to the level of a central principle. As a rule, human thought is not motivated by a contemplative impulse since it requires a volitional and emotional-unconscious undercurrent to assure the continuous orientation for knowledge in group life. Precisely because knowing is fundamentally collective knowing (the thought of the lone individual is only a special instance and a recent development), it presupposes a community of knowing which grows primarily out of a community of experiencing prepared for in the subconscious. However, once the fact has been perceived that the largest part of thought is erected upon a basis of collective actions, one is impelled to recognize the force of the collective unconscious. The full emergence of the sociological point of view regarding knowledge inevitably carries with it the gradual uncovering of the irrational foundation of rational knowledge.

That the epistemological and psychological analysis of the genesis of ideas came only belatedly upon the social factor in knowledge has its explanation in the fact that both these disciplines had their rise in the period of the individualistic form of society. They acquired the framework of their problems in periods of quite radical individualism and subjectivism, in the epoch of the disintegrating medieval social order, and in the liberal beginnings of the bourgeois-capitalistic era. In these periods, those who concerned themselves with these problems, the intellectuals and the well-to-do educated persons in bourgeois society, found themselves in circumstances in which the original interconnectedness of the social order must of necessity have been largely invisible to them. They could, therefore, in all good faith, present knowledge and experience as typically individualistic phenomena. Especially since they had in mind only that segment of reality which concerned the dominant minorities and which was characterized by the competition of individuals, social happenings could appear as though autonomous individuals supplied from within themselves the initiative

for acting and knowing. Seen from this segment, society appeared as if it were only an incalculably complex multiplicity of spontaneous individual acts of doing and knowing. This extremely individualistic character does not even hold for the so-called liberal social structure as a whole, inasmuch as here too the relatively free initiative of leading individuals both in acting and knowing is directed and guided by the circumstances of social life and by the tasks which they present. (Thus here, too, we find a hidden social interconnection underlying individual initiative.) On the other hand, this much is undoubtedly true, that there are social structures in which there is the possibility for certain strata (because of the larger area over which free competition obtains) to have a greater degree of individualization in their thought and conduct. It is, however, incorrect to define the nature of thought in general on the basis of this special historical situation in which a relatively individualized way of thinking was allowed to develop under exceptional conditions. It would do violence to the historical facts to regard this exceptional condition as if it were the axiomatic characteristic of the psychology of thought and of epistemology. We will not succeed in attaining an adequate psychology and theory of knowledge as a whole as long as our epistemology fails, from the very beginning, to recognize the social character of knowing, and fails to regard individualized thinking only as an exceptional instance.

In this case, too, it is obviously no accident that the sociological standpoint was added to the others only at a relatively advanced date. Nor is it by chance that the outlook which brings together the social and the cognitive spheres emerges in a time in which the greatest exertion of mankind once more consists in the attempt to counteract the tendency of an individualistic undirected society, which is verging toward anarchy, with a more organic type of social order. In such a situation there must arise a general sense of interdependence—of the interdependence which binds the single experience to the stream of experience of single individuals and these in turn to the fabric of the wider community of experience and activity. Thus, the newly arising theory of knowledge too is an attempt to take account of the rootedness of knowledge in the social texture. In it a new sort of life-orientation is at work, seeking to stay the alienation and disorganization which arose out of the exaggeration of the individualistic and mechanistic attitude. The epistemological,

the psychological, and the sociological ways of stating problems are the three most important forms of raising questions about and investigating the nature of the cognitive process. We have sought to present them so that they would appear as parts of a unitary situation, emerging one after the other in a necessary sequence and reciprocally penetrating one another. In this form they provide the basis of the reflections recorded in this volume.

4. Control of the Collective Unconscious as a Problem of our Age

The emergence of the problem of the multiplicity of thought-styles which have appeared in the course of scientific development and the perceptibility of collective-unconscious motives hitherto hidden, is only one aspect of the prevalence of the intellectual restiveness which characterizes our age. In spite of the democratic diffusion of knowledge, the philosophical, psychological, and sociological problems which we presented above have been confined to a relatively small intellectual minority. This intellectual unrest came gradually to be regarded by them as their own professional privilege, and might have been considered as the private preoccupation of these groups had not all strata, with the growth of democracy, been drawn into the political and philosophical discussion.

The preceding exposition has already shown, however, that the roots of the discussion carried on by the intellectuals reached deeply into the situation of society as a whole. In many respects their problems were nothing else than the sublimated intensification and rational refinement of a social and intellectual crisis which at bottom embraced the entire society. The breakdown of the objective view of the world, of which the guarantee in the Middle Ages was the Church, was reflected even in the simplest minds. What the philosophers fought out among themselves in a rational terminology was experienced by the masses in the form of religious conflict.

When many churches took the place of one doctrinal system guaranteed by revelation with the aid of which everything essential in an agrarian-static world could be explained—when many small sects arose where there had formerly been a world religion, the minds of simple men were seized by tensions similar to those which the intellectuals experienced on the philosophical level

in terms of the co-existence of numerous theories of reality and of knowledge.

At the beginning of modern times, the Protestant movement set up in the place of revealed salvation, guaranteed by the objective institution of the Church, the notion of the subjective certainty of salvation. It was assumed in the light of this doctrine that each person should decide according to his own subjective conscience whether his conduct was pleasing to God and conducive to salvation. Thus Protestantism rendered subjective a criterion which had hitherto been objective, thereby paralleling what modern epistemology was doing when it retreated from an objectively guaranteed order of existence to the individual subject. It was not a long step from the doctrine of the subjective certainty of salvation to a psychological standpoint in which gradually the observation of the psychic process, which developed into a veritable curiosity, became more important than the harkening to the criteria of salvation which men had formerly tried to detect in their own souls.

Nor was it conducive to the public belief in an objective world-order when most political states in the period of enlightened absolutism attempted to weaken the Church by means which they had taken over from the Church itself, namely, through attempting to replace an objective interpretation of the world guaranteed by the Church, by one guaranteed by the State. In doing this, it advanced the cause of the Enlightenment which at the same time was one of the weapons of the rising bourgeoisie. Both the modern state and the bourgeoisie achieved success in the measure that the rationalistic naturalistic view of the world increasingly displaced the religious one. This took place, however, without the permeation into the broadest strata of that fullness of knowledge required for rational thinking. Furthermore, this diffusion of the rationalistic world-view was realized without the strata involved in it being brought into a social position which would have allowed an individualization of the forms of living and thinking.

Without, however, a social life-situation compelling and tending toward individualization, a mode of life which is devoid of collective myths is scarcely bearable. The merchant, the entrepreneur, the intellectual, each in his own way occupies a position which requires rational decisions concerning the tasks set by everyday life. In arriving at these decisions, it is always necessary for the individual to free his judgments from those of others and to

think through certain issues in a rational way from the point of view of his own interests. This is not true for peasants of the older type nor for the recently emerged mass of subordinate white-collar workers who hold positions requiring little initiative, and no foresight of a speculative kind. Their modes of behaviour are regulated to a certain extent on the basis of myths, traditions or mass-faith in a leader. Men who in their everyday life are not trained by occupations which impel toward individualization always to make their own decisions, to know from their own personal point of view what is wrong and what is right, who from this point on never have occasion to analyse situations into their elements and who, further, fail to develop a self-consciousness in themselves which will stand firm even when the individual is cut off from the mode of judgment peculiar to his group and must think for himself—such individuals will not be in a position, even in the religious sphere, to bear up under such severe inner crises as scepticism. Life in terms of an inner balance which must be ever won anew is the essentially novel element which modern man, at the level of individualization, must elaborate for himself if he is to live on the basis of the rationality of the Enlightenment. A society which in its division of labour and functional differentiation cannot offer to each individual a set of problems and fields of operation in which full initiative and individual judgment can be exercised, also cannot realize a thorough-going individualistic and rationalistic *Weltanschauung* which can aspire to become an effective social reality.

Although it would be false to believe—as intellectuals easily tend to do—that the centuries of the Enlightenment actually changed the populace in a fundamental way, since religion even though weakened lived on as ritual, cult, devotion, and ecstatic modes of experience, nonetheless their impact was sufficiently strong to shatter to a large extent the religious world-view. The forms of thought characteristic of industrial society gradually penetrated into those areas which had any contact whatever with industry and sooner or later undermined one element after another of the religious explanation of the world.

The absolute state, by claiming as one of its prerogatives the setting forth of its own interpretation of the world, took a step which later on with the democratization of society tended more and more to set a precedent. It showed that politics was able to use its conception of the world as a weapon and that politics was not merely a struggle for power but really first became

fundamentally significant only when it infused its aims with a kind of political philosophy, with a political conception of the world. We can well dispense with sketching in detail the picture of how, with increasing democratization, not only the state but also political parties strove to provide their conflicts with philosophical foundation and systematization. First liberalism, then haltingly following its example conservatism, and finally socialism made of its political aims a philosophical credo, a world-view with well established methods of thought and prescribed conclusions. Thus to the split in the religious world-view was added the fractionalization of political outlooks. But whereas the churches and sects conducted their battles with diverse irrational articles of faith and developed the rational element in the last analysis only for the members of the clergy and the narrow stratum of lay intellectuals, the emergent political parties incorporated rational and if possible scientific arguments into their systems of thought to a much greater degree and attributed much more importance to them. This was due in part to their later appearance in history in a period in which science as such was accorded a greater social esteem and in part to the method by which they recruited their functionaries, since in the beginning, at least, these were chosen largely from the ranks of the above-mentioned emancipated intellectuals. It was in accord with the needs of an industrial society and of these intellectual strata for them to base their collective actions not on a frank enunciation of their creed but rather on a rationally justifiable system of ideas.

The result of this amalgamation of politics and scientific thought was that gradually every type of politics, at least in the forms in which it offered itself for acceptance, was given a scientific tinge and every type of scientific attitude in its turn came to bear a political colouration.

This amalgamation had its negative as well as its positive effects. It so facilitated the diffusion of scientific ideas that ever broader strata in the whole of their political existence had to seek theoretical justifications for their positions. They learned thereby —even though frequently in a very propagandistic manner— to think about society and politics with the categories of scientific analysis. It was also helpful to political and social science in that it gained a concrete grip on reality and in so doing gave itself a theme for stating its problems, which furnished a continuous link between it and that field of reality within which it had to operate, namely, society. The crises and the exigencies of social

life offered the empirical subject-matter, the political and social interpretations, and the hypotheses through which events became analysable. The theories of Adam Smith as well as those of Marx—to mention only these two—were elaborated and extended with their attempts to interpret and analyse collectively experienced events.

The principal liability, however, in this direct connection between theory and politics lies in the fact that while knowledge always has to retain its experimental character if it wishes to do justice to new sets of facts, thinking which is dominated by a political attitude can not allow itself to be continuously readapted to new experiences. Political parties, because of the very fact of their being organized, can neither maintain an elasticity in their methods of thought nor be ready to accept any answer that might come out of their inquiries. Structurally they are public corporations and fighting organizations. This in itself already forces them into a dogmatic direction. The more intellectuals became party functionaries, the more they lost the virtue of receptivity and elasticity which they had brought with them from their previous labile situation.

The other danger which arises from this alliance between science and politics is that the crises affecting political thinking also become the crises of scientific thought. Out of this complex we will concentrate on only one fact which, however, became significant for the contemporary situation. Politics is conflict and tends increasingly to become a life-and-death struggle. The more violent this struggle became, the more tightly did it grip the emotional undercurrents which formerly operated unconsciously but all the more intensively, and forced them into the open domain of the conscious.

Political discussion possesses a character fundamentally different from academic discussion. It seeks not only to be in the right but also to demolish the basis of its opponent's social and intellectual existence. Political discussion, therefore, penetrates more profoundly into the existential foundation of thinking than the kind of discussion which thinks only in terms of a few selected " points of view " and considers only the " theoretical relevance " of an argument. Political conflict, since it is from the very beginning a rationalized form of the struggle for social predominance, attacks the social status of the opponent, his public prestige, and his self-confidence. It is difficult to decide in this case whether the sublimation or substitution of discussion

for the older weapons of conflict, the direct use of force and oppression, really constituted a fundamental improvement in human life. Physical repression is, it is true, harder to bear externally, but the will to psychic annihilation, which took its place in many instances, is perhaps even more unbearable. It is therefore no wonder that particularly in this sphere every theoretical refutation was gradually transformed into a much more fundamental attack on the whole life-situation of the opponent, and with the destruction of his theories one hoped also to undermine his social position. Further, it is not surprising that in this conflict, in which from the very start one paid attention not only to what a person said but also the group for which he was the spokesman and with what action in view he set forth his arguments, one viewed thought in connection with the mode of existence to which it was bound. It is true that thought has always been the expression of group life and group action (except for highly academic thinking which for a time was able to insulate itself from active life). But the difference was either that in religious conflicts, theoretical issues were not of primary significance or that in analysing their adversaries, men did not get to an analysis of their adversaries' groups because, as we have seen, the social elements in intellectual phenomena had not become visible to the thinkers of an individualistic epoch.

In political discussion in modern democracies where ideas were more clearly representative of certain groups, the social and existential determination of thought became more easily visible. In principle it was politics which first discovered the sociological method in the study of intellectual phenomena. Basically it was in political struggles that for the first time men became aware of the unconscious collective motivations which had always guided the direction of thought. Political discussion is, from the very first, more than theoretical argumentation; it is the tearing off of disguises—the unmasking of those unconscious motives which bind the group existence to its cultural aspirations and its theoretical arguments. To the extent, however, that modern politics fought its battles with theoretical weapons, the process of unmasking penetrated to the social roots of theory.

The discovery of the social-situational roots of thought at first, therefore, took the form of unmasking. In addition to the gradual dissolution of the unitary objective world-view, which to the simple man in the street took the form of a plurality of divergent conceptions of the world, and to the intellectuals

presented itself as the irreconcilable plurality of thought-styles, there entered into the public mind the tendency to unmask the unconscious situational motivations in group thinking. This final intensification of the intellectual crisis can be characterized by two slogan-like concepts " ideology and utopia " which because of their symbolic significance have been chosen as the title for this book.

The concept " ideology " reflects the one discovery which emerged from political conflict, namely, that ruling groups can in their thinking become so intensively interest-bound to a situation that they are simply no longer able to see certain facts which would undermine their sense of domination. There is implicit in the word " ideology " the insight that in certain situations the collective unconscious of certain groups obscures the real condition of society both to itself and to others and thereby stabilizes it.

The concept of *utopian* thinking reflects the opposite discovery of the political struggle, namely that certain oppressed groups are intellectually so strongly interested in the destruction and transformation of a given condition of society that they unwittingly see only those elements in the situation which tend to negate it. Their thinking is incapable of correctly diagnosing an existing condition of society. They are not at all concerned with what really exists ; rather in their thinking they already seek to change the situation that exists. Their thought is never a diagnosis of the situation ; it can be used only as a direction for action. In the utopian mentality, the collective unconscious, guided by wishful representation and the will to action, hides certain aspects of reality. It turns its back on everything which would shake its belief or paralyse its desire to change things.

The collective unconscious and the activity impelled by it serve to disguise certain aspects of social reality from two directions. It is possible, furthermore, as we have seen above, to designate specifically the source and direction of the distortion. It is the task of this volume to trace out, in the two directions indicated, the most significant phases in the emergence of this discovery of the role of the unconscious as it appears in the history of ideology and utopia. At this point we are concerned only with delineating that state of mind which followed upon these insights since it is characteristic of the situation from which this book came forth.

At first those parties which possessed the new " intellectual

weapons", the unmasking of the unconscious, had a terrific advantage over their adversaries. It was stupefying for the latter when it was demonstrated that their ideas were merely distorted reflections of their situation in life, anticipations of their unconscious interests. The mere fact that it could be convincingly demonstrated to the adversary that motives which had hitherto been hidden from him were at work must have filled him with terror and awakened in the person using the weapon a feeling of marvellous superiority. It was at the same time the dawning of a level of consciousness which mankind had hitherto always hidden from itself with the greatest tenacity. Nor was it by chance that this invasion of the unconscious was dared only by the attacker while the attacked was doubly overwhelmed—first, through the laying bare of the unconscious itself and then, in addition to this, through the fact that the unconscious was laid bare and pushed into prominence in a spirit of enmity. For it is clear that it makes a considerable difference whether the unconscious is dealt with for purposes of aiding and curing or for the purpose of unmasking.

To-day, however, we have reached a stage in which this weapon of the reciprocal unmasking and laying bare of the unconscious sources of intellectual existence has become the property not of one group among many but of all of them. But in the measure that the various groups sought to destroy their adversaries' confidence in their thinking by this most modern intellectual weapon of radical unmasking, they also destroyed, as all positions gradually came to be subjected to analysis, man's confidence in human thought in general. The process of exposing the problematic elements in thought which had been latent since the collapse of the Middle Ages culminated at last in the collapse of confidence in thought in general. There is nothing accidental but rather more of the inevitable in the fact that more and more people took flight into scepticism or irrationalism.

Two powerful currents flow together here and reinforce one another with an overwhelming pressure: one, the disappearance of a unitary intellectual world with fixed values and norms; and, two, the sudden surge of the hitherto hidden unconscious into the bright daylight of consciousness. Man's thought had from time immemorial appeared to him as a segment of his spiritual existence and not simply as a discrete objective fact. Reorientation had in the past frequently meant a change in man himself. In these earlier periods it was mostly a case of slow

shifts in values and norms, of a gradual transformation of the frame of reference from which men's actions derived their ultimate orientation. But in modern times it is a much more profoundly disorganizing affair. The resort to the unconscious tended to dig up the soil out of which the varying points of views emerged. The roots from which human thought had hitherto derived its nourishment were exposed. Gradually it becomes clear to all of us that we cannot go on living in the same way once we know about our unconscious motives as we did when we were ignorant of them. What we now experience is more than a new idea, and the questions we raise constitute more than a new problem. What we are concerned with here is the elemental perplexity of our time, which can be epitomized in the symptomatic question " How is it possible for man to continue to think and live in a time when the problems of ideology and utopia are being radically raised and thought through in all their implications ? "

It is possible, of course, to escape from this situation in which the plurality of thought-styles has become visible and the existence of collective-unconscious motivations recognized simply by hiding these processes from ourselves. One can take flight into a supra-temporal logic and assert that truth as such is unsullied and has neither a plurality of forms nor any connection with unconscious motivations. But in a world in which the problem is not just an interesting subject for discussion but rather an inner perplexity, someone will soon come forth who will insist against these views that " our problem is not truth as such ; it is our thinking as we find it in its rootedness in action in the social situation, in unconscious motivations. Show us how we can advance from our concrete perceptions to your absolute definitions. Do not speak of truth as such but show us the way in which our statements, stemming from our social existence, can be translated into a sphere in which the partisanship, the fragmentariness of human vision, can be transcended, in which the social origin and the dominance of the unconscious in thinking will lead to controlled observations rather than to chaos ". The absoluteness of thought is not attained by warranting, through a general principle, that one has it or by proceeding to label some particular limited viewpoint (usually one's own) as supra-partisan and authoritative.

Nor are we aided when we are directed to a few propositions in which the content is so formal and abstract (e.g. in

mathematics, geometry, and pure economics) that in fact they seem to be completely detached from the thinking social individual. The battle is not about these propositions but about that greater wealth of factual determinations in which man concretely diagnoses his individual and social situation, in which concrete interdependences in life are perceived and in which happenings external to us are first correctly understood. The battle rages concerning those propositions in which every concept is meaningfully oriented from the first, in which we use words like conflict, breakdown, alienation, insurrection, resentment—words which do not reduce complex situations for the sake of an externalizing, formal description without ever being able to build them up again and which would lose their content if their orientation, their evaluative elements, were dropped out.

We have already shown elsewhere that the development of modern science led to the growth of a technique of thought by means of which all that was only meaningfully intelligible was excluded. Behaviourism has pushed to the foreground this tendency towards concentration on entirely externally perceivable reactions, and has sought to construct a world of facts in which there will exist only measurable data, only correlations between series of factors in which the degree of probability of modes of behaviour in certain situations will be predictable. It is possible, and even probable, that sociology must pass through this stage in which its contents will undergo a mechanistic dehumanization and formalization, just as psychology did, so that out of devotion to an ideal of narrow exactitude nothing will remain except statistical data, tests, surveys, etc., and in the end every significant formulation of a problem will be excluded. All that can be said here is that this reduction of everything to a measurable or inventory-like describability is significant as a serious attempt to determine what is unambiguously ascertainable and, further, to think through what becomes of our psychic and social world when it is restricted to purely externally measurable relationships. There can no longer be any doubt that no real penetration into social reality is possible through this approach. Let us take for example the relatively simple phenomenon denoted by the term " situation ". What is left of it, or is it even at all intelligible when it is reduced to an external constellation of various reciprocally related but only externally visible patterns of behaviour ? It is clear, on the other

hand, that a human situation is characterizable only when one has also taken into account those conceptions which the participants have of it, how they experience their tensions in this situation and how they react to the tensions so conceived. Or, let us take some milieu; for instance, the milieu in which a certain family exists. Are not the norms which prevail in this family, and which are intelligible only through meaningful interpretation, at least as much a part of the milieu as the landscape or the furniture of the household? Still further, must not this same family, other things being equal, be considered as a completely different milieu (e.g. from the point of the training of the children) if its norms have changed? If we wish to comprehend such a concrete phenomenon as a situation or the normative content of a milieu, the purely mechanistic scheme of approach will never suffice and there must be introduced in addition concepts adequate for the understanding of meaningful and non-mensurative elements.

But it would be false to assume that the relations between these elements are less clear and less precisely perceivable than those that obtain between purely measurable phenomena. Quite on the contrary, the reciprocal interdependence of the elements making up an event is much more intimately comprehensible than that of strictly external formalized elements. Here that approach which, following Dilthey, I should like to designate as the understanding of the primary interdependence of experience (*das verstehende Erfassen des „ursprünglichen Lebenszusammenhanges*" [1]) comes into its own. In this approach, by use of the technique of understanding, the reciprocal functional interpenetration of psychic experiences and social situations becomes immediately intelligible. We are confronted here with a realm of existence in which the emergence of psychic reactions from within becomes evident of necessity and is not comprehensible merely as is an external causality, according to the degree of probability of its frequency.

Let us take certain of the observations which sociology has worked up by the use of the method of understanding and consider the nature of its scientific evidence. When one has stated concerning the ethics of the earliest Christian communities, that it was primarily intelligible in terms of the resentment of oppressed strata, and when others have added that this ethical

[1] Here I use Dilthey's expression, leaving unsettled the question as to how his use of the term is different from that above.

outlook was entirely unpolitical because it corresponded to the mentality of that stratum which had as yet no real aspirations to rule ("Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's"), and when it has been said further that this ethic is not a tribal ethic but a world ethic, since it arose from the soil of the already disintegrated tribal structure of the Roman Empire, it is clear that these interconnections between social situations on the one hand and psychic-ethical modes of behaviour on the other are not, it is true, measurable but can none the less be much more intensively penetrated in their essential character than if coefficients of correlation were established between the various factors. The interconnections are evident because we have used an understanding approach to those primary interdependences of experience from which these norms arose.

It has become clear that the principal propositions of the social sciences are neither mechanistically external nor formal, nor do they represent purely quantitative correlations but rather situational diagnoses in which we use, by and large, the same concrete concepts and thought-models which were created for activistic purposes in real life. It is clear, furthermore, that every social science diagnosis is closely connected with the evaluations and unconscious orientations of the observer and that the critical self-clarification of the social sciences is intimately bound up with the critical self-clarification of our orientation in the everyday world. An observer who is not fundamentally interested in the social roots of the changing ethics of the period in which he himself lives, who does not think through the problems of social life in terms of the tensions between social strata, and who has not also discovered the fruitful aspect of resentment in his own experience, will never be in a position to see that phase of Christian ethics described above, to say nothing of being able to understand it. It is precisely in the degree in which he participates evaluationally (sympathetically or antagonistically) in the struggle for ascendancy of the lower strata, in the degree that he evaluates resentment positively or negatively, that he becomes aware of the dynamic significance of social tension and resentment. "Lower class," "social ascendancy," "resentment" instead of being formal concepts are meaningfully oriented concepts. If they were to be formalized, and the evaluations they contain distilled out of them, the thought-model characteristic of the situation, in which it is precisely resentment which produced the good and novel fruitful norm,

would be totally inconceivable. The more closely one examines the word " resentment " the more clear it becomes that this apparently non-evaluative descriptive term for an attitude is replete with evaluations. If these evaluations are left out, the idea loses its concreteness. Furthermore, if the thinker had no interest in reconstructing the feeling of resentment, the tension which permeated the above-described situation of early Christianity would be entirely inaccessible to him. Thus here, too, the purposefully oriented will is the source of the understanding of the situation.

In order to work in the social sciences one must participate in the social process, but this participation in collective-unconscious striving in no wise signifies that the persons participating in it falsify the facts or see them incorrectly. Indeed, on the contrary, participation in the living context of social life is a presupposition of the understanding of the inner nature of this living context. The type of participation which the thinker enjoys determines how he shall formulate his problems. The disregard of qualitative elements and the complete restraint of the will does not constitute objectivity but is instead the negation of the essential quality of the object.

But, at the same time, the reverse the greater the bias, the greater the objectivity, is not true. In this sphere there obtains a peculiar inner dynamic of modes of behaviour in which, through the retention of the *élan politique*, this *élan* subjects itself to an intellectual control. There is a point at which the *élan politique* collides with something, whereupon it is thrown back upon itself and begins to subject itself to critical control. There is a point where the movement of life itself, especially in its greatest crisis, elevates itself above itself and becomes aware of its own limits. This is the point where the political problem-complex of ideology and utopia becomes the concern of the sociology of knowledge, and where the scepticism and relativism arising out of the mutual destruction and devalution of divergent political aims becomes a means of salvation. For this relativism and scepticism compel self-criticism and self-control and lead to a new conception of objectivity.

What seems to be so unbearable in life itself, namely, to continue to live with the unconscious uncovered, is the historical prerequisite of scientific critical self-awareness. In personal life, too, self-control and self-correction develop only when in our originally blind vital forward drive we come upon an obstacle

which throws us back upon ourselves. In the course of this collision with other possible forms of existence, the peculiarity of our own mode of life becomes apparent to us. Even in our personal life we become masters of ourselves only when the unconscious motivations which formerly existed behind our backs suddenly come into our field of vision and thereby become accessible to conscious control. Man attains objectivity and acquires a self with reference to his conception of his world not by giving up his will to action and holding his evaluations in abeyance but in confronting and examining himself. The criterion of such self-illumination is that not only the object but we ourselves fall squarely within our field of vision. We become visible to ourselves, not just vaguely as a knowing subject as such but in a certain role hitherto hidden from us, in a situation hitherto impenetrable to us, and with motivations of which we have not hitherto been aware. In such moments the inner connection between our role, our motivations, and our type and manner of experiencing the world suddenly dawns upon us. Hence the paradox underlying these experiences, namely the opportunity for relative emancipation from social determination, increases proportionately with insight into this determination. Those persons who talk most about human freedom are those who are actually most blindly subject to social determination, inasmuch as they do not in most cases suspect the profound degree to which their conduct is determined by their interests. In constrast with this, it should be noted that it is precisely those who insist on the unconscious influence of the social determinants in conduct, who strive to overcome these determinants as much as possible. They uncover unconscious motivations in order to make those forces which formerly ruled them more and more into objects of conscious rational decision.

This illustration of how the extension of our knowledge of the world is closely related to increasing personal self-knowledge and self-control of the knowing personality is neither accidental nor peripheral. The process of the self-extension of the individual represents a typical example of the unfolding of every kind of situationally determined knowledge, i.e. of every kind of knowledge which is not merely the simple objective accumulation of information about facts and their causal connections, but which is interested in the understanding of an inner interdependence in the life process. Inner interdependence can be grasped only by the understanding method of interpretation,

and the stages of this understanding of the world are bound at every step to the process of individual self-clarification. This structure, in accordance with which self-clarification makes possible the extension of our knowledge of the world about us, obtains not only for individual self-knowledge but is also the criterion of group self-clarification. Although here, too, it should again be emphasized that only individuals are capable of self-clarification (there is no such thing as a "folk mind" and groups as wholes are as incapable of self-clarification as they are of thinking), it makes a powerful difference whether an individual becomes conscious of those quite special unconscious motivations which have characterized particularly his previous thinking and acting or whether he is made aware of those elements in his motivations and outlook which tie him to the members of a particular group.

It is a problem in itself as to whether the sequence which the stages of self-clarification follow is entirely a matter of chance. We are inclined to believe that individual self-clarification occupies a position in a stream of self-clarification, the social source of which is a situation common to the different individuals. But whether we are here concerned with the self-clarification of individuals or of groups, one thing is common to both, namely, their structure. The centrally important feature of this structure is that in so far as the world does become a problem it does not do so as an object detached from the subject but rather as it impinges upon the fabric of the subject's experiences. Reality is discovered in the way in which it appears to the subject in the course of his self-extension (in the course of extending his capacity for experience and his horizon).

What we have hitherto hidden from ourselves and not integrated into our epistemology is that knowledge in the political and social sciences is, from a certain point on, different from formal mechanistic knowledge; it is different from that point where it transcends the mere enumeration of facts and correlations, and approximates the model of situationally determined knowledge to which we shall refer many times in the present work.

Once the interrelationship between social science and situationally-bound thinking, as it is for instance found in political orientation, becomes evident, we have reason to investigate the positive potentialities as well as the limits and dangers of this type of thinking. It is furthermore important that we take our point of departure in that state of crisis and

uncertainty in which were disclosed the dangers of this sort of thinking as well as those new possibilities of self-criticism through which it was hoped that a solution could be found.

If the problem is attacked from this point of view, the uncertainty which had become an ever more unbearable grief in public life becomes the soil from which modern social science gains entirely new insights. These fall into three main tendencies: first, the tendency towards the self-criticism of collective-unconscious motivations, in so far as they determine modern social thinking; second, the tendency towards the establishment of a new type of intellectual history which is able to interpret changes in ideas in relation to social-historical changes; and, third, the tendency towards the revision of our epistemology which up to now has not taken the social nature of thought sufficiently into account. The sociology of knowledge is, in this sense, the *systematization* of the doubt which is to be found in social life as a vague insecurity and uncertainty. The aim of this book is on the one hand the clearer theoretical formulation of one and the same problem from different angles, and on the other the elaboration of a method which will enable us, on the basis of increasingly precise criteria, to distinguish and isolate diverse styles of thinking and to relate them to the groups from which they spring.

Nothing is simpler than to maintain that a certain type of thinking is feudal, bourgeois or proletarian, liberal, socialistic, or conservative, as long as there is no analytical method for demonstrating it and no criteria have been adduced which will provide a control over the demonstration. Hence the chief task in the present stage of research is to elaborate and concretize the hypotheses involved in such a way that they can be made the basis of inductive studies. At the same time, the segments of reality with which we deal must be analysed into factors in a much more exact manner than we have been accustomed to do in the past. Our aim then is, first, to refine the analysis of meaning in the sphere of thought so thoroughly that grossly undifferentiated terms and concepts will be supplanted by increasingly exact and detailed characterizations of the various thought-styles; and, second, to perfect the technique of reconstructing social history to such an extent that, instead of scattered isolated facts, one will be able to perceive the social structure as a whole, i.e. the web of interacting social forces from which have arisen the various modes of observing and thinking through

the existing realities that presented themselves at different times.

There are such vast possibilities of precision in the combination of meaning-analysis and sociological situational diagnosis that in time it may be possible to compare them with the methods of the natural sciences. This method will have, in addition, the advantage that it will not have to disregard the realm of meaning as uncontrollable but will on the contrary make the interpretation of meaning a vehicle of precision.[1] If the interpretive technique of the sociology of knowledge should succeed in attaining this degree of exactness, and if with its help the significance of social life for intellectual activity should become demonstrable through ever more precise correlation, then it would also bring with it the advantage that in the social sciences it would no longer be necessary, in order to be exact, to renounce the treatment of the most important problems. For it is not to be denied that the carrying over of the methods of natural science to the social sciences gradually leads to a situation where one no longer asks what one would like to know and what will be of decisive significance for the next step in social development, but attempts only to deal with those complexes of facts which are measurable according to a certain already existent method. Instead of attempting to discover what is most significant with the highest degree of precision possible under the existing circumstances, one tends to be content to attribute importance to what is measurable merely because it happens to be measurable.

[1] The author has attempted to work out this method of sociological analysis of meaning in his study, " Das konservative Denken : Soziologische Beiträge zum Werden des politisch-historischen Denkens in Deutschland," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* (1927), vol. 57. There he attempted to analyse as precisely as possible all the important thinkers of a single political current with reference to their style of thinking and to show how they used every concept differently from the way it was used by other groups, and how with the change in their social basis their thought-style also changed. Whereas in that study we proceeded " microscopically ", so to speak, in the sense that we made a precise investigation of a limited section of intellectual and social history, in the studies contained in the present volume we use an approach which might be termed " macroscopic ". We seek to diagnose the most important steps in the history of the ideology-utopia complex ; or, in other words, to illuminate those turning-points which appear to be crucial when looked at from a distance. The macroscopic approach is the more fruitful one when, as in the case of this book, one is attempting to lay the foundations of a comprehensive problem-complex ; the microscopic, when one is seeking to verify details of limited range. Basically they belong together and must always be applied alternatively and complementarily. The reader who wishes to obtain a complete picture of the applicability of the sociology of knowledge in historical research is referred to this study

At the present stage of development we are still far from having unambiguously formulated the problems connected with the theory of the sociology of knowledge, nor have we yet worked out the sociological analysis of meaning to its ultimate refinement. This feeling of standing at the beginning of a movement instead of the end conditions the manner in which the book is presented. There are problems about which neither textbooks nor perfectly consistent systems can be written. They are those questions which an age has as yet neither fully perceived nor fully thought through. For such problems earlier centuries, which were shaken by the repercussions of the revolution in thought and experience from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, invented the form of the scientific essay. The technique of the thinkers of that period consisted in leaping into any immediate problem which was conveniently at hand and observing it for so long and from so many angles that finally some marginal problem of thought and existence was disclosed and illuminated by means of the accidental individual case. This form of presentation, which since has so frequently proved its worth, served as a prototype to the author when in the present volume, with the exception of the last part, he chose to employ the essay form and not the systematic style of treatment.

These studies are attempts to apply a new way of looking at things and a new method of interpretation to various problems and bodies of facts. They were written at different times and independently of one another and, although they centre about a unitary problem, each of these essays has its own intellectual objective.

This essayistic-experimental attitude in thought also explains why here and there repetitions have not been eliminated and contradictions resolved. The reason for not eliminating repetitions was that the same idea presented itself in a new context and was therefore disclosed in a new light. Contradictions have not been corrected because it is the author's conviction that a given theoretical sketch may often have latent in it varied possibilities which must be permitted to come to expression in order that the scope of the exposition may be truly appreciated.[1] It is his

[1] In this connection it should be noted how in the second part of this book the so-called relativistic possibilities of the same ideas, how in the fourth the activistic-utopian elements, and in the last the tendency toward a harmonious-synthetic solution of the same fundamental issues comes to the fore. To the extent that the experimental method of thinking devotes itself to the exploration of the various possibilities contained in germinal ideas

further conviction that frequently in our time various notions derived from contradictory styles of thought are at work in the same thinker. We do not note them, however, only because the systematic thinker carefully hides his contradictions from himself and his readers. Whereas contradictions are a source of discomfiture to the systematizer, the experimental thinker often perceives in them points of departure from which the fundamentally discordant character of our present situation becomes for the first time really capable of diagnosis and investigation.

A brief summary of the contents of the parts that follow should provide a background for the analyses undertaken in them :—

Part II examines the most important changes in the conception of Ideology, pointing out on the one hand how these changes in meaning are bound up with social and historical changes, and attempting on the other hand to demonstrate with concrete examples how the same concept in different phases of its history can mean at one time an evaluative and at another time a non-evaluative attitude, and how the very ontology of the concept is involved in its historical changes, which pass almost unnoticed.

Part III deals with the problem of scientific politics : how is a science of politics possible in face of the inherently ideological character of all thought ? In this connection an attempt will be made to work out empirically an important example of an analysis of the meaning of a concept along the lines of the sociology of knowledge. It will be shown, for example, how the concepts of Theory and Practice differ in the vocabularies of different groups, and how these differences in the uses of words arise out of the positions of the different groups and can be understood by a consideration of their different situations.

Part IV deals with the " Utopian Mentality ", and turns to an analysis of the utopian element in our thought and experience. An attempt is made to indicate with reference to only a few crucial cases how extensively the changes in the utopian element in our thought influence the frame of reference we use for the ordering and evaluation of our experiences, and how such changes can be traced back to social movements.

Part V offers a systematic summary and prospectus of the new discipline of the Sociology of Knowledge.

the point illustrated above becomes apparent—that the same " facts ", under the influence of the will and the changing point of view, can often lead to divergent conceptions of the total situation. As long, however, as a connection between ideas is still in the process of growth and becoming, one should not hide the possibilities which are still latent in it but should submit it in all its variations to the judgment of the reader.